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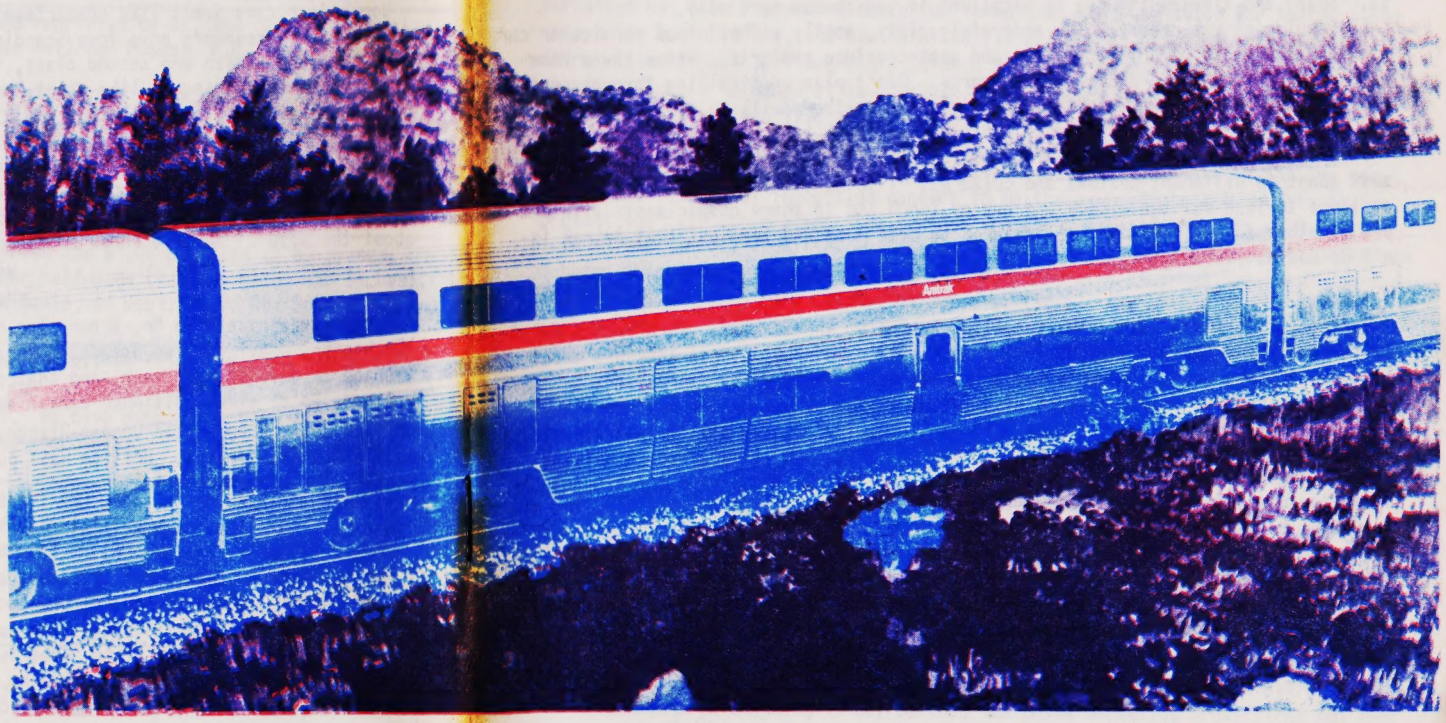

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by E. D. Worley

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LETTERS

In response to Robert A. Brown's letter concerning European trains (2nd July RTN): (1) European trains have had facing seats for a long time--the passengers seem to like them. (2) Some trains do change direction en route and one sees few wyes. Why? Well, after the train enters a stub-end station, they take the engine off the front and attach another engine on the rear and off they go. This reduces station time, and Europeans are used to snappy operation of their trains. (3) So Salzburg had the only visible (sic) roundhouse--European railroads are operated for their passengers, not for railfans. (4) Hotels often have no air conditioning, it's true, but maybe Europeans don't need to be as air conditioned as we do.

Is it too much to hope that visitors to foreign countries accept the fact that things are bound to be different? Must we expect to be provided with a McDonald's on every German block?...

Peter Davies
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Allow me to second Mr. Brown's comments about European rail travel.

Catch one of the bargain air charters to Europe? YES! Buy a Eurailpass? YES!

Dream about finding pre-Amtrak SUPER CHIEF-style service and equipment? STAY HOME AND DREAM!

Having just returned from Europe with several thousand Eurailpass miles to my credit, I found the railroads offer frequent service with good connections in most areas. Speed and timekeeping can be excellent if you choose carefully.

The equipment was dreary, hot, moderately dirty, mostly without food service or car attendants, devoid of drinking water and most creature comforts. Never saw a dome car, and American-style sleepers are scarce. Don't plan on strolling throughout the train because when you get to the second class cars there will be more passengers in the aisles than in the compartments. Baggage service--take a back pack.

This is by no means a condemnation, as I realize that when in another country you must adapt to different customs and cultures. I found it to be a great learning experience to lean out the window and buy my lunch and to share compartments with people of other countries. Just be prepared to come home and find out that Amtrak isn't as bad as you thought.

Thomas E. McKiernan
Cincinnati, Ohio

During July I spent four weeks traveling by train, second class, thru France (mostly), Belgium and the Netherlands. I was going to make some adverse comments about European trains, but Mr. Brown's letter pretty well summed up my impressions.

I want to comment on the subject of safety. In 1972 I was on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR when it derailed in Nebraska (RTN, Sept 18, 1972; issue still available at 30¢ --Ed. note). This summer I was on the train to Paris when it derailed in Belgium with 11 dead and many injured. By chance, we were in the front cars and did not realize the reason for the emergency stop (the last half of the train had derailed at a switch) or the seriousness of the accident for some time. Apparently, many dead and injured were thrown from the cars that overturned--one consequence, I suspect, of riding in non-air conditioned cars in hot weather. The open windows are a hazard in an accident, since passengers can be thrown thru them if the car overturns. Also, baggage on the racks in compartments must be potentially lethal to the passengers on the opposite side.

(continued on page 23)

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ON THE COVER

Amtrak's new bi-level cars will look like this. The paint scheme will follow that of current new equipment--no Amtrak logos, but solid red-white-and-blue striping. Amtrak has made another revision in its bi-level car order with Pullman-Standard: instead of ordering 34 economy sleepers and 36 mixed-class sleepers, as reported last issue, Amtrak will order 70 mixed-class sleepers. An Amtrak spokesman told RTN that the new cars will contain (upstairs:) five 1st class bedrooms with toilets; ten economy rooms without toilets; (downstairs:) four economy rooms without toilets; one family room with two adult-size and two child-size beds; one room for handicapped passengers, with upper and lower bed and special toilet for handicapped. There will be five public toilets on the lower level, none on the upper. This design has now apparently been finalized, and updates the information given last issue. Illustration courtesy of Pullman-Standard.

DOT IS WITHHOLDING AMTRAK FUNDS

Readers will recall the Office of Management and Budget's practice of impounding funds for projects it disliked, a practice declared illegal by the courts during the Nixon administration. It has recently come to light that the Dept. of Transportation has been impounding operating funds that Congress voted for Amtrak. The impounding began in May, and has totalled $14 million to date, reportedly leaving Amtrak "penniless." DOT Secretary Coleman said that he held back the money because Amtrak was going to spend it to purchase the Northeast Corridor, and he believed that that purchase was illegal, even tho the Senate had instructed Amtrak and Con-Rail to work out their own arrangement for Amtrak's taking over the Corridor (see RTN, 2nd March issue). The DOT has strongly objected to Amtrak's buying the corridor, and the act of impounding appears to be the agency's latest move to try to prevent the rail corporation from controlling the Northeastern rails.

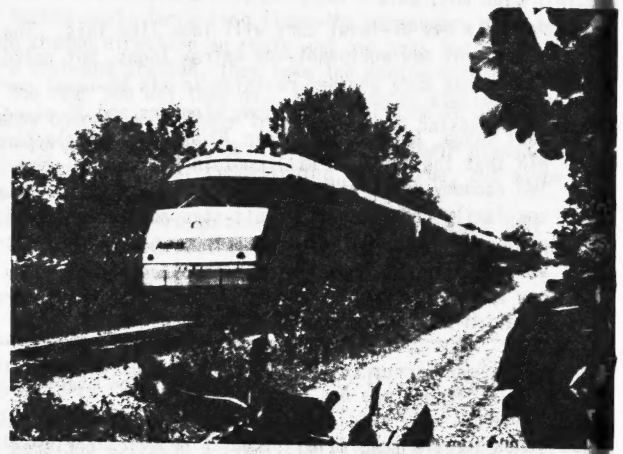
In a joint Senate committee hearing on Aug 10, Coleman and Amtrak representatives debated this issue. The session was a stormy one, with chairman Senator Birch Bayh and Coleman entering into a shouting match at times. The upshot of the meeting was that Amtrak and the DOT were to make a further effort to settle their dispute. In the meantime, Amtrak is unable to pay bills it currently owes, and will be further burdened with interest payments for paying its debts late.

TWO EASTERN TRAINS WILL BE EXTENDED BEYOND THE SUMMER

Amtrak announced on Aug 17 that the NY-Newport News COLONIAL and the NY-Savannah PALMETTO will be extended "indefinitely" beyond the original Sept 8 cut-off date of experimental operation. The two trains began running in mid-June, and after six weeks of ridership data had been studied, Amtrak decided that both are "well worth further study and development." Ridership figures for the PALMETTO for the period Jun 15-30 showed an average of 453 passengers per day south of Washington for north and southbound trains combined. Preliminary July figures showed a "steady increase" in ridership, Amtrak said. The June ridership was actually 28% higher than Amtrak's marketing projections. The COLONIAL carried an average of 123 passengers in the same 15-day period, 60% below marketing predictions but over double that carried on the former Newport News-Charlottesville section of the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY. However, preliminary July figures showed a "healthy pattern", Amtrak said, and intensified promotion is expected to boost ridership. Despite the time extension, both trains retain their "experimental" status.

Mailing date for this issue of RTN: August 23, 1976.

AMTRAK PHASING IN TURBOLINERS ON EMPIRE SERVICE ROUTE



Amtrak said late in August that it would phase in the new Rohr-built Turboliners on the Empire Service instead of starting with the fanfare of a big inaugural run, saving the inaugural ceremonies for the post-Labor Day period. The first revenue run was to be that of train 75 (currently called the SALT CITY EXPRESS) which runs between NY and Syracuse, on Aug 19. The first Turboliner was to leave from Albany for Syracuse at 6:55pm that date.

The French-type turbine powered trains, built by Rohr in California, are of slightly larger dimensions than the French-built trains in the Midwest, and feature more streamlined front styling (see publicity photo released by Amtrak this month, above). They have third-rail capability, to permit them to operate between Croton/Harmon and Grand Central Terminal in New York City. Amtrak said it expects all seven of these trains to be in operation in New York State by mid-December. The first trainset to arrive in the East (actually the second off the production line; the first went to Pueblo, Colo. for testing) left San Diego Jul 17, reached Chicago on Jul 19 and New York State on the 21st. The trains are kept at Albany/Rensselaer, where Amtrak is building a maintenance facility for them.

SUMMARY OF FALL AMTRAK CHANGES

The following changes are proposed to be effective Oct 31. Since these are preliminary plans, not all of them will see the light of day, but most can probably be expected to take place with the fall time change:

SUNSET LIMITED: operate eastbound train one hour later. SOUTHWEST LTD & LONE STAR: combine the trains between Chicago & Kansas City. S.F. ZEPHYR: cut running time, initiate a new stop at Colfax, CA. EMPIRE BUILDER, N. COAST HIAWATHA, COAST STARLIGHT: cut running time on BN tracks. INTER-AMERICAN: operate daily between Chicago and Ft. Worth. NATIONAL LTD, BROADWAY LTD, LAKE SHORE LTD: cut running time. METROPOLITAN: start new train Washington DC-Cincinnati, numbered 32-33. J.W. RILEY: eliminate stop at Chessie Charlottesville station. FLORIDIAN: reverse the schedule pattern to a one-night-out schedule, possibly combine with AUTO-TRAIN consist. PANAMA LTD: cut running time. ADIRONDACK: cut running time. Empire Service: cut running times and introduce new schedule patterns with new Turboliner equipment. PALMETTO: cut running time. STATE HOUSE: run only Chic-Springfield. ANN RUTLEDGE: drop train; operate daily INTER-AMERICAN instead. ABRAHAM LINCOLN: run daily, add stop at Carlinville. Train 320 (Chic-Milw Turboliner): operate 20min earlier. Chicago-Toronto: initiate new train, numbered 366-367. BLUE RIDGE: run only Washington-Martinsburg when METROPOLITAN begins operation. SAINT CLAIR: operate 20min later southbound. MICHIGAN EXECUTIVE: operate 20min earlier southbound. SAINT CLAIR: operate 30min later northbound. BLACK HAWK, ILLINOIS ZEPHYR: cut running times. ARROWHEAD: (# 761, 763) extend to Duluth; (#766) cut running time. PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, PUGET SOUND: cut running time. MOUNT RAINIER: slight schedule change. SAN DIEGAN, train 775: operate 30min earlier.

PLANNING FOR A NEW TRAIN

by Robert W. Rynerson

MODERN NORTHWEST PIONEERS ON AN EXPEDITION IN PREPARATION FOR PORTLAND-OGDEN TRAIN SERVICE

A red and white Plymouth minibus rolled up to Portland's Union Station in place of the special train that ambiguous media reports had led some to expect. The day was August 6. It was the start of the Great Oregon Association of Railway Passengers Expedition to the East--the Association's first public project: a call on local citizens in each of the towns which might likely be served by a Portland-Boise-East train to be operated by Amtrak over the Union Pacific.

The official party was a cross-section of interests, designed to provide both assistance and encouragement to local communities. Leading the group was John Perrin, Portland attorney and pro tem chairman of OreARP. Others were Bob Rynerson, planner with the Oregon DOT and NARP at-large board member; Dale Archibald, Chief Curator of Oregon Historical Society; Bill Parish, Portland architect; John Sparrows, chairman of OreARP's Portland-to-East committee; and Ken McFarling, longtime Portland area rail advocate, bringing a knowledge of railway engineering.

As the van crossed the Steel Bridge auto deck, the seventh member of the party was somewhere north of Salem. Art Poole, OreARP director from Coquille, was on board the delayed northbound COAST STARLIGHT, which had struck a cement truck.

With a running time based on Greyhound schedules, the minibus bounced along, while the expedition members glanced enviously at work crews laying new ties on UP's already well-kept line. The van crossed the Sandy River, and suddenly the suburbs and orange Tri-Met buses were gone, while the minibus passengers carried on a shouted business session over the engine and tire and wind noise. The towering cliffs of the Columbia Gorge seemed to echo the rumble back at us. Where was Amclub when we really needed it?

Cascade Locks (population 620--43 miles from Portland Union Station) was the first stop. At the port offices (and excursion boat landing) a half dozen civic leaders and officials were realists about the unlikelihood of the townspeople generating many trips on their own. However, a morning out-evening in schedule from Portland would attract scores of tourists and school groups who now come to visit the historic and dramatically situated Columbia Gorge town. Railfans know it as the location of countless pictures, including the oft-published publicity shot of the Streamliner CITY OF PORTLAND sweeping around the curve beneath the cantilevered Bridge of the Gods.

At Hood River (population 4525--63 miles from Portland) a group of about 15 townspeople waiting on the platform of the Harriman-style stucco UP station created an eerie sensation, to be repeated at other points along the route, of "intending passengers". Hood River had been a flag stop for the Streamliner, a full stop for all other trains.

The wind whipping the minibus about reminded the expedition members of the comments made at these two stops--that tho the Gorge was little touched by snowfall, icy winds sometimes closed the Interstate freeway. Once in the 1960s the UP had rescued stranded motorists at Cascade Locks during an ice storm. Without rail service the people of each community the expedition was to visit felt cut off during the winter. Mail service--the people also longed for a return to Railway Post Office service, or at least direct sacks. Once again winter was mentioned as an added burden, as trucks foundered in snow, or were stopped by wind closures in mountain passes in Eastern Oregon and Idaho.

The Dalles (population 10,770--84 miles out) has no rail passenger station, and the members found themselves meeting with over 70 people in a cafe room. After a public

session, a no-host dinner followed. The Dalles faces a complex set of issues in establishing a station, as a Sambo's Restaurant and a street extension have been proposed for the city center station site.

Late in the evening the minibus pulled into Boardman (pop. 525--164 miles out). In the morning a brief meeting was held with the port manager at his home, the relocated former OWRR&N station. The new station ironically is the "readiest" of any of those visited, having been built during a Corps of Engineers line relocation project in the 1950s. Boardman's role as a highway junction town brings it into the "future interest" category as a possible stop.

The Union Pacific was finally starting to gain elevation as it pulled away from the Columbia water level route. At Hinkle (no population) about 30 persons stood waiting on the eastbound platform. The major of nearby Hermiston (pop. 5865) surprised everyone by appearing in the black suit and top hat of a pioneer-era mayor. Lest we think this was for the visitors' benefit, he explained that a pioneer days parade was due to start in a few minutes. A larger crowd would have appeared, he said, except that many were busy with parade preparations. Other communities were also represented. The UP division point is a major economic force in the region, and work was observed beginning on a $15 million expansion project. Platforms and servicing facilities at Hinkle look like they did in May 1971, but the former passenger station (another 1950s structure) has become a microwave communications center. Space does appear to be available for an addition to the building for passengers.

Pendleton, noted for its noisy Round-Up days (pop. 14,010) proved a quiet visit for the OreARP group. Confident in its role as the major center of its region and served by a brick station which appears ready for the next train, the city formed a 3-man delegation of city councilmen to meet the expedition. Major discussion centered around possible connecting bus service from Spokane via Pullman, WA and Leviston, ID, and possible enhancement of the station's appearance. A poignant note was added by discovery of the train-off bulletins posted in April 1971, announcing the formation of Amtrak and the end of operations for UP trains 17, 18, 19, 20, 105, 106, 457, and 458 in Oregon. The latter two survive as Amtrak 796 and 797. The dry, yellowing pages crinkled in the hands of OreARP's explorers, as they leafed thru the lists of communities cast aside by the planners in Washington DC.

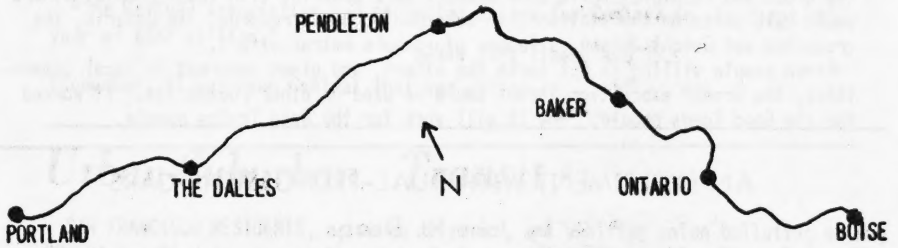
Out of Pendleton (elev. 1069 feet) the climb really began. East of here the UP heads into the Umatilla Indian Reservation along the river of the same name, while the freeway, emboldened by a healthy shot of federal funds, assaults the Blue Mountains directly. The highway summit is shown as 4193 feet. The UP reaches 4205 at Kamela in the area where the Interstate rejoins it. Between Pendleton and La Grande the highway mileage is listed as 52, while the rail mileage is 74. The difference is a spectacular swing thru a land unreached by paved roads, shown as a forested green blank on highway maps. Descending rapidly into La Grande, the two run side by side again.

La Grande (pop. 10,410, elev. 2788) appeared around a curve. The UP divisional yard and Eastern Oregon State College were the notable man-made features. The minibus swung into the parking lot of what must be the grandest of small city stations along the line. Rampant eagles clutch Overland Route shields above the windows of the two-story combination station and division office building. Meeting with the expedition were about 25 people--local officials, interested citizens, and a travel agent. The agent emphasized the icy isolation of wintertime Eastern Oregon: 3 or 4 months of the year he writes a good volume of business for a remote Amtrak outlet; then bad weather closes in and patrons are unwilling to drive the 259 miles to Portland or the 114 icy night miles to Pasco to make Amtrak connections.

Climbing again, the minibus headed for Baker (pop. 9450, elev. 3438). Here again the UP line swung away into the blank portions of the highway map into an area of hot springs and jumbled hills and canyons and barbed wire fences weighted with rocks against the wind. Baker, like La Grande, is set in a Blue Mountain valley.

Older visitors recall the Sumpter Valley narrow gauge line into Baker from Prairie City to the west. No 3-rail track was visible, but a revival of the line in the Sumpter area 30 miles from Baker has put a mile of track back into service under steam power. In the historic city hall chambers the members met with city officials and others again. The major problem was similar to that in The Dalles--the absence of a passenger station, torn down in a grade crossing improvement. No one knew where a train would stop. Real effort by the local people would be needed.

The last leg of the trip was ahead. The UP and the Interstate twine thru the narrow valleys descending toward the Snake River. Then at Lime they diverge sharply as the UP turns toward the river, and the freeway continues a drier course thru sagebrush hills. At Ontario they meet again. Ontario (pop. 7700, elev. 2160) is



the crossroads of far Eastern Oregon and the end of the OreARP group's journey of discovery. Local citizens met the minibus at the 2-story stone Oregon Short Line station, and a no-host dinner followed.

Entering the banquet room, the voyageurs made a startling discovery. Decorating the walls were photos covering rail history in the Malheur County area, and most amazingly, Amtrak posters proclaiming the "nationwide rail passenger system." The dining table centerpiece was an HO-scale model of an Amtrak train, along with models of earlier UP trains. We were 430 miles from the Amtrak Portland station at that moment. The mileposts here count down toward the east, for this is Oregon Short Line country.

Expedition members spent the night (August 7) in Ontario. In the night, trains rumbled thru en route to Nampa, the next division point. Beyond lay another 430 miles of UP rail to Ogden and the proposed linkup with Amtrak's SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. We slept on the Oregon shore of a vast ocean of rails to the east. The names of vessels that once roamed that sea floated to mind: PACIFIC LIMITED, OREGON AND WASHINGTON EXPRESS, PORTLAND ROSE, and others which left only a whistle as evidence of their passing. The Streamliner, M-10001 had sailed there, too.

Sunday morning the expedition headed back toward Portland, with a quick trip by Weiser, ID (a stone station in downtown ready for train time), then along the old route of US 30 parallel to the Snake River into Huntington. Huntington was a timetable feature that will be an unlikely entrant in Amtrak's folder. It was the remote town in which Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Co. turned over its trains to Oregon Short Line. As a division point it became a busy center, remaining as the boundary between UP's Idaho and Oregon divisions thru the close of the streamliner era. All UP passenger trains stopped there until May 1971, and passengers changed their watches in Huntington from Mountain to Pacific time or vice versa. Now Huntington is the quiet home for 530 persons, a bedroom community for the cement plant at nearby Lime.

The pounding drive at Greyhound speeds began again, and the minibus pulled up in front of Portland Union Station once again shortly after 6pm. Mileage on the rented van reached almost the 800 mark. The members agreed that the expedition had been a success. A multi-disciplinary team will be able to pass on suggestions to Amtrak. Communities now know who to contact in Amtrak, state government, or OreARP for information and assistance. Local people now have a better understanding of what is in-

volved in obtaining and retaining rail passenger service in the 1970s. Unfortunately, no one from Amtrak was able to travel with the group, due partly to the short period in which the trip was planned. The information gathered will be sent on to Amtrak.

The trip was a modern version of the old Good Roads caravans across Oregon in the 1910s and 1920s. Those efforts brought forth the roads that got the farmers out of the mud, and then put everyone else into cars. The end of rail passenger service has lowered the quality of life in rural America.

A considerable amount of work went into organizing the trip. Cooperation from UP officials was needed for visits to stations. The mix of specialized knowledge in the group was helpful. While some members were speaking with local people, others would take notes on the stations, or make photographic records. In Ontario, the group had met Dwight Jensen, a leader of Idaho's Amtrak effort.

Given people willing to put forth the effort, and given interest in local communities, the OreARP expedition format could be used on other routes too. It worked for the Good Roads people. Now it will work for the Good Trains people.

AN EXPERIMENT WITH DUAL-PROPULSION CARS

by John H. Deasy

New York State's Metropolitan Transportation Authority on June 17 placed a prototype gas turbine/electric trainset in revenue service on the Long Island Rail Road. The inaugural run of the 4-car consist departed the suburban town of Oyster Bay at 9:04am. Its arrival at Penn Station in Manhattan marked the first time in 87 years of LIRR service to Oyster Bay that commuters had the opportunity to travel from Oyster Bay to Penn Station without having to change from a locomotive-hauled train to m.u. electric cars at Jamaica Station.

This train, built by General Electric, was set to demonstrate on a number of the LIRR's branches, and was to be joined by a 4-car set manufactured by the Garrett Corporation. The two consists were also to see revenue service on the MTA's Harlem (Grand Central Terminal to Brewster) and Hudson (G.C.T. to Poughkeepsie) lines operated by ConRail. This $14.8 million demonstration project, sponsored in conjunction with the U.S. DOT, is the end product of extensive non-revenue testing on LIRR.

The GE-built cars, which bear numbers 4005-4008, are similar in appearance to the MTA's fleet of Budd-constructed "Metropolitan" m.u. electric commuter cars. However, the new equipment incorporates a dual propulsion system. In addition to the contact shoes mounted on the trucks, which feed current to the traction motors when the train is operating in electrified territory, each car contains two compact, lightweight 500hp gas turbine engines located in sound-proofed compartments. With but a flick of a switch by the engineer, the turbines take over when the third rail falls behind. The cars have special adaptors which allow them to load and unload passengers at the low-level platforms found in the non-electric region. The MTA's planners are promoting this equipment as one solution to their current problem of providing improved higher speed service beyond the existing limits of electrified (third rail) trackage.

I rode the train, operating as Extra 4005 West, between Port Jefferson and Penn Station, on June 18. The ride was fast, comfortable and uneventful. The engineer claimed that the controls were simple and easy to operate, but the trainmen expressed concern over the safety of the low-level platform door adaptors. In my opinion, extending electrification on the LIRR and ConRail lines under the MTA's jurisdiction is a better solution to their problem. The substantial initial capital investment would be more than justified by the resulting lower long-run operating costs.

Greyhound now advertises the "Overnight Express" between L.A. and San Francisco, an 8-hr trip with free pillow at $39.20 roundtrip. Uses Interstate 5.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"One of the happy lessons offered by the Washington Metro is simply never to underestimate the appeal of good rail rapid transit. The nation's second all-new subway system to be built in the last half century is operational on just about 5% of its projected 98 route miles. Yet, its Monday-to-Friday average ridership of 21,000 has exceeded nearly three-fold that which was originally anticipated..."

--Kenneth G. Ellsworth in Railway Age, Aug 9.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"The Railway Association had projected a loss for Con ail in its first full year of $332 million."

--New York Times, Aug 13.

(Remember, it was Penn Central that was ailing.)

Urban-Suburban Transit

SAN FRANCISCO RESIDENTS, as we go to press, are awaiting union balloting on Aug 22 which will determine whether S.F. Muni transit workers will call a strike. The city's transit facilities were shut down for a 38-day strike which ended early in May while transit workers were out in sympathy with a city crafts workers strike. And S.F.-Marin Golden Gate Transit strikers returned recently after a 65-day work stoppage. Meanwhile in Southern California, L.A. transit workers are also voting on a possible strike action.

THE ROCK ISLAND is threatening to shut down its commuter lines to Blue Island and Joliet IL unless the Regional Transportation Authority comes up with higher subsidies.

STATE OF CONNECTICUT has ordered ConRail to institute new safety steps on its New Haven commuter line, following the New Canaan accident in July that killed two, reports the New York Times (Aug 22).

A NEW TRY for another Los Angeles-San Diego train is being made by CalTrans, the Calif. transportation agency. It is negotiating with Amtrak for an afternoon run between the two populous cities.

BOSTON AND MAIN patronage for the first half of 1976 began with a 10% decline and has begun to correct itself, so the net loss is now but 5%. Most of this can be blamed on the winter and what it did to equipment and thus schedule reliability.

NEW FIAT CAR went into revenue service on the B&M on Aug 14, following FRA approval the day before. Special shuttle trips were run for a buck a ride between Reading and Melrose as part of the latter's Bicentennial celebration. New General Manager of Passenger Service for B&M is Frank Fotta, who was once with the old Pennsy in the Pittsburgh area.

THE CONRAIL COMMUTER line between Chicago and Valparaiso IN will keep running at least thru next March, as the Northwestern Indiana Public Transportation Authority has arranged for federal funding for the line for that time period.

QUEBEC PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT has reopened negotiations with the MAN consortium of West Germany for construction of a transit bus factory in Quebec. Other manufacturers may join the MAN group. GM has been building some transit buses in Quebec since 1973.

CROWDING HAS INCREASED on the Yonge St. line, but the Toronto TTC announced that turnbacks of some rush-hour subway trains at Eglinton station will be continued as a cost-cutting measure. TTC has announced a large-scale study to examine all schedules and routes for possible cost-savings as the system undergoes a massive, rapidly increasing deficit.

THE READERS COMMENT

A SAMPLE OF READERS' COMMENTS FROM OUR TRAIN RATING SURVEY (SEE LAST ISSUE FOR NUMERICAL TRAIN RATING RESULTS)

AUTO-TRAIN

"Employees well trained, courteous. Buffet food can't compare with sit-down meal, but handled well. Stations need enlarging. Track on RF&P proved a jolting experience. Overall, enjoyed the trip. Have recommended it to friends. This is rail travel at its best" (Edward H. Hovard, Rimersburg, PA).

"Altho service was good, the use of the ex-Santa Fe dome lounges is an abomination. The changing lights thru the dome windows make sleep come hard. Many windows have been replaced with darker panels, no doubt to help solve this problem, but this results in poor daylight viewing. There is no place to store carry-on bags and these must be stored on the floor where the feet belong. The rest rooms stuck on the lower floor in the lounge area are extremely small and inadequate for the number of people carried. The cars were built as lounges and do not convert favorably into coaches. However, the car retained as the nightclub lounge was well done and featured live music. The ex-UP and WP dome coaches were not that objectionable, as they were built as coaches. However, even in those, I would not want to sleep in the lounge section. I never realized how much window shades aid in sleeping" (Stan D. Wilson, Shafter, CA).

AMFLEET-EQUIPPED TRAINS

"These cars ride fantastically well. I even dozed off during some of the old rough stretches of track. The Amclub should definitely have swivel chairs and the Amcafe is a poor substitute for a dining car" (Danny Vaccaro, Great Neck, NY).

"These cars are a prayer answered. Only lack foot rests. Could use more food quantity and choices. Ride is great and quiet!" (Ron Goldfeder, Ft. Myer, VA).

"Very pleased with the comfort and ease, new equipment's spaciousness. I plan to use the (NE Corridor) route as much as I can instead of driving" (Jerome Skuba, Yellow Springs, OH).

"First northbound PALMETTO run was superb,with Amfleet equipment flawless. Despite two slow orders for track repairs, schedule was maintained" (Paul Conaway, Macon GA).

"This was our first ride on the new Amfleet equipment, and it lived up to our expectations. Patronage was amazingly high. Snack bar was inadequate to handle the crowds and ran out of most items long before Providence" (Perry Huntoon, Houston TX).

"Only 12 breakfasts supplied for 300 people aboard; sold out in 10 minutes" (Adron F. Hall, Alexandria VA).

"I detest Amfleet equipment! The seats are too narrow and too close together, and that low-overhanging baggage rack is a deadly weapon. Worst of all about these cars is their coffin-like feel, produced by blocked-off interior vision, deadening acoustics, muted lighting and ridiculously small windows. I've avoided Metroliners for these reasons but now I guess I'm stuck with their progeny. Oh, well, most passengers seem to simply adore these new cars. For a while at least I can always go to Penn Station at 3am for the NIGHT OWL need I go to Boston or DC" (Michael Leighton, Mount Kisco NY).

"I feel Amfleet equipment will be well accepted with the public. The use of the P.A. system was appreciated. I do feel the restrooms were designed too small, and the windows are too small, and wonder how the afternoon sun will feel on the passenger, with no window shades. I was looking forward to the good ride, which most report, but did not find it much different than standard equipment" (Stan D. Wilson, Shafter CA).

"I was most pleased with the conductor who said 'Yes sir' when I handed him my ticket and 'Thank you sir' when he gave me my seat check. Amcafe personnel were

friendly and the food prepared by Marriott Corp. was tasty; the soft drinks on tap in the Amcafes are very good. I am looking forward to the day when Amtrak will run E60 engines with Amfleet cars at Metroliner speeds" (John H. Deasy, New York NY).

"Amcoaches are barely adequate for 6-hr run, and there isn't an inch of lounge space, and no dressing space in toilets. The chemical toilets are incredibly foul, unlike airline equivalents" (Charles Landey, Detroit MI).

"Amclub cars aren't bad if you don't mind paying first class plus a parlor ticket to ride in a coach. Amcoaches are not bad for the corridor where trips are relatively short. Curved sides reduce overhead luggage storage, however" (David Peironnet, Knoxville TN).

"Nice to have working air conditioning. Cars were extremely quiet and smooth riding. Food service was disappointing; would have preferred a sit-down dinner" (Jeff Cole, Carpinteria CA).

"New equipment does not always mean perfection: one train departed DC an hour late and the food service wasn't open for another half hour, and many things weren't available. The after-thought quality of the parlor cars (no washrooms; attendant spending most of his time in the snack bar) is all too apparent. Why couldn't the cars have been designed with full headroom and decent-size windows? Too much airline mentality here" (Duane Roller, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada).

"Excellent riding, smooth, no noise" (Stephen E. Morse, Marshall MN).

CANADIAN

"Operated with more outright class than any U.S. train I've ever been on, starting right from boarding at Vancouver when you could make a dinner reservation thru the sleeping car conductor. Almost without exception, the crew members were personable and polite, with none of the rudeness so frequently reported on Amtrak. The P.A. system was used very effectively to announce all meal calls, and to remind passengers the night before a time change. A sheet describing the spiral tunnels was passed out in the rear dome while ascending Kicking Horse Pass, and the flagman pointed out the various details. The domes are a big plus factor. Superb scenery! Biggest drawback is the worn-out condition of much of the upholstery. The second day out of Vancouver, the dome in the skyline car was horribly littered, which together with shoddy upholstery made it downright repulsive" (Jeff Pletcher, Lafayette LA).

"Greatest train on the continent of North America!" (Wm. Staiger, Harrisburg PA).

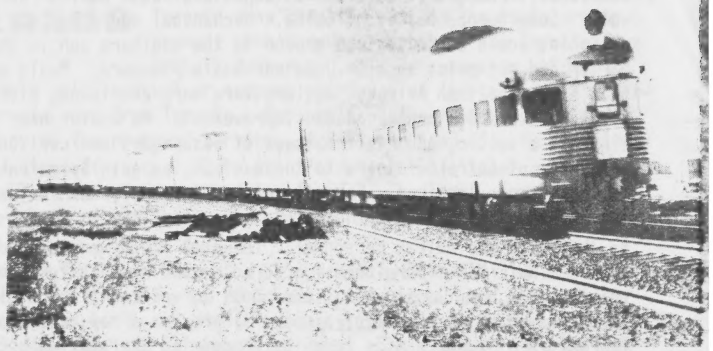
"Trains ran late last week of June due to two freight derailments and heavy patronage because of airline strike. Train 1 was 12hrs late at Banff June 25; we were treated to scenic British Columbia route in daylight hours, with free meals. Crew and food excellent" (John Kramer, W. Henrietta NY).

"The finest train in North America. Diner food not as good as in past, but otherwise first rate" (Philip J. Mulligan, Philadelphia PA).

"Advised by friends and RTN, I made my long-awaited journey on #1 Montreal-Vancouver. While riding the dome of the observation car I joined a fellow in the observation end and discovered I was talking to RTN's Pete Bretz. We discussed the condition of the train--clean, minimal lexan, and comfortably appointed; but burdened with high prices and that faded look so often mentioned by Glenn Lee. A few other defects were present--Pete noticed that the speaker grill on the forward wall of the dome, which was supposed to resemble a lute, was mounted upside down. The shoe box in my roomette was labelled for waste papers, and vice versa. All in all, a fine train, with fine food, fine crew and fine scenery. I even had the pleasure of a locomotive cab ride on one segment of the journey. This train is a 'must' for any serious railroader" (William D. Sample, E. Hartford CT).

"This could be a great train if the track were upgraded to permit higher speeds; this does not seem to be possible in the near future as a result of a rational national rail policy. The low speed is no doubt the most important factor responsible for the low patronage; too often, this is a ghost train carrying as many crew members as passengers (many of whom seem to have railway discount passes). Crew morale

HIGHLY-RATED TRAINS: (l to r) AUTO-TRAIN (A-T photo). Amfleet-equipped trains (the COLONIAL at Richmond--Ken Maylath photo). RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR (photo by Peter Bretz).



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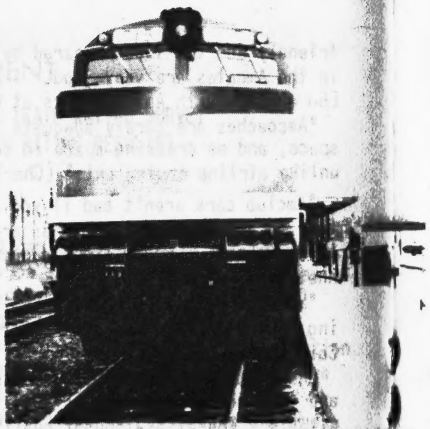

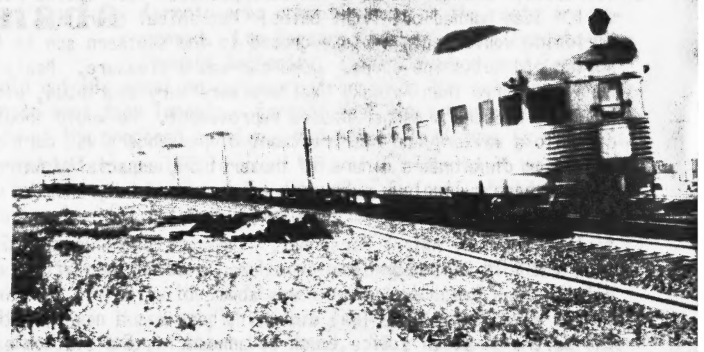

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With notable exception of dining car steward, train personnel were all very courteous. Lounge not as clean as expected. Wash basins ready to fall off the wall. Some burned out light bulbs. Mechanical operation was good, but air conditioning would begin to lose ground to the southern sun in the afternoon. SR porter did not shine shoes. Dome car was a pleasure. Meals were good, but much more expensive than Amtrak. Waiters were very courteous, efficient, and neat. However, steward's manner needed improvement. He would shout the length of the diner to a waiter, and his treatment of passengers was curt and abrupt. We prefer the decor of Amtrak's diners to those of SR, especially Amtrak's carpeted floors to the Southern's linoleum. Several coaches were hot, and the decor was not as pleasing as Amtrak's" (James W. Hofmeister, Houston TX).

to that from any Amtrak personnel. The eggs I had were as bad as the ones on Amtrak's MINUTE MAN. For lunch I ordered a cold ham platter, and the ham had more gristle than ham. Just when I was about to write off the dining car as a total loss, it was saved by an excellent dinner. There was a new crew that was more efficient. The maitre d' added a nice touch by announcing the station each time the train stopped. Amtrak dining car personnel usually did not know what state we were in, much less what station. Just as on the Amtrak dome cars, the SR dome had filthy front and rear windows" (James Russo, Baltimore MD).

"The 'train of trains' in the East. This is Service with a capital 'S'. I had forgotten what a clean and well-maintained train was like until I rode this one. Windows are clean glass. Food is a bit more expensive than Amtrak, but worth it. What is the secret of the warm hospitality and high morale of the Southern personnel?" (Maryland reader).

"What I expected to be a Premier train turned out to be quite a disappointment. I found most of the cars rather drab and dingy (have I been riding too much Amtrak?). A couple were actually dirty--including the diner, where I noticed that the vents on the ceiling were black with dust and grime. My sleeping compartment was rather scruffy. The light-colored walls were all scuffed, the bed latch did not work properly, giving me a bouncy ride at night. The dome was the only car that I could give a high rating: it was clean and fresh-looking, but unfortunately not a parlor as advertised, but a coach. This train certainly needs better lounge facilities. If it were not for the wonderful service and excellent food, I would almost rate this train '4'" (Rolf H. Schneider, Falls Village CT).

LAST RUN OF THE LAS VEGAS LIMITED

The State of Nevada failed to come forth with more 403-B money, and the new Los Angeles-Las Vegas weekend train was discontinued, making its last runs Aug 6-8.

Consist of the last train was engines 220 (F40), 500 (SDP); highlevel coaches 9944, 9935, 9953, 9929, lounge 3393, diner 8033, coaches 7508 & 7513.

Reader Herbert J. Furth was aboard, and files the following report: the train ran about 3/4 full to Las Vegas. On the return, the highlevel coaches appeared to be filled to near capacity, partly occasioned by air conditioning failure in coach 7508. The train arrived at the Nevada gambling city a few minutes early. On the return trip it reached every stop a few minutes early, until placed in the hole at Chapman (East Pasadena) for the late-running eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED. It arrived at Pasadena and Los Angeles 15 minutes late. En route thru Highland Park, the train was stoned, and rocks broke two windows in highlevel coach 9953.

Mr. Furth says "There was no fanfare at Las Vegas for the last departure, nor did I find any mention of the last train in papers there. The lack of publicity is probably what caused suspension of this service. After the first runs I saw hardly any mention or advertising in the L.A. press."

It was the third time that a Los Angeles-Las Vegas train was initiated and then discontinued under Amtrak. Amtrak numbered the latest train 781 and 782.

Rail Canada

PASSENGER SERVICE ON CP Rail's Toronto-to-London main line may be revived if plans for introducing Toronto-area commuter runs on the route are approved. Lou Parsons, member of the Toronto Area Transit Authority, said patronage on a Toronto-Milton commuter run would quickly equal or surpass patronage on the existing Toronto-Oakville "Lakeshore" route west from Toronto. Parsons made the remarks as he announced a $337,000 study of the proposed service. A 3-4 year lead time is expected.

CN AND CP Rail have rejected proposals to run an "old-time train tour" on industrial trackage near the Toronto waterfront. A Toronto group had requested permits to operate a 1926-model rail motor car and trailer on the route. The equipment is currently located at the Canadian Railway Museum.

A BOEING HYDROFOIL named "Flying Princess" will operate between Seattle and Victoria BC for a test period Sep 17-Nov 1, the BC Steamship Co. announced. Fares will be $16 one way, $30 round trip. The craft, which seats 224 passengers in a jet-aircraft type cabin, will make the trip in about two hours. Seattle departure will be 9am, returning 5:30pm from Victoria. The trips will overlap those of the "Princess Marguerite," which will operate for the public thru Sep 24.

A 1977 STARTUP for the Toronto-Richmond Hill GO-Transit commuter train service was announced as construction of facilities began in August. About 1000 daily patrons are expected on 3 morning trains into Toronto, and 3 evening trains returning to the north-suburbs area.

IN EARLY AUGUST political writer Nicholas of the widespread Southam newspaper chain wrote that the CTC decision charging CP Rail with deceit in allowing the E&N railway line on Vancouver Island to deteriorate as a prelude to abandonment of both passenger and freight service may lay groundwork for a national takeover of rail beds in the Dominion. First serious proposal for this move was made by Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed in 1973. Later, federal transport minister Jean Marchand made a similar proposal, and recently Conservative Party opposition leaders have made suggestions for a national takeover of both rail beds and passenger services. Tory transport critic Jack Horner, said recently that better track structures are needed to cut freight derailments and allow for higher passenger train speeds that will be needed in the future.

THE PRESS REACTION to proposals that the "Princess Marguerite" be retired from the Seattle-Victoria run in favor of a diesel ferry has been generally unfavorable. The Victoria Times editorialized that the ship's traditional charm should not be underestimated. It said that tourists were not flocking aboard the "sterile" B.C. ferries; and that the Marguerite has had more cliffhanging junctures than the average episode of "The Perils of Pauline." Maury Gwynne, "Victorian" columnist, said the ship is "a natural for the U.S. tourist looking for something different." Times staff writer Kit Collins said the move the replace the Marguerite "is certain to bring a storm of protest from Washington State where the former CP vessel is almost an institution. Seattle visitors who have taken the trip report that the Marguerite, which has the romance and tradition of the small luxury liner, is half the reason for the voyage."

AN HISTORIC LINK with the colourful past of CP's "Princess" liners was severed in July by the retirement of Walter Phillips, chief engineer on the "Princess Marguerite". As a young man, Phillips went to war with his ship, the first "Princess Marguerite," when that vessel was withdrawn from the Seattle-Victoria run in Sep 1941 for troop duty in the Mediterranean. He served aboard her prior to the time she was torpedoed bya German U-boat in Aug 1942.

THERE WERE INDICATIONS that the B.C. government had already decided to replace the "Princess Marguerite" and was waiting for the best time to announce the move. It is expected that the ex-Scandinavian sea-going ferry "Queen of Surrey" would replace her. Hardly the "bit of old England" that the Marguerite is on the tourist route, the "Surrey" features saunas, three dance floors, a discotheque and other features normally found on long distance cruise ships.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

AMTRAK WILL DISTRIBUTE a magazine for passengers aboard its trains starting in January. The bi-monthly publication, to be titled "All Aboard," will be published for Amtrak by Caldwell Communications Inc. of New York City. Its first distribution will be aboard Northeastern trains..... MAY RIDERSHIP FIGURES from Amtrak show the COAST STARLIGHT holding its own as the nation's most-patronized train, but the LONE STAR is moving upward and closing the gap on it. We will print full figures next issue, at which time the June data should also be available. Starting with July figures, Amtrak will be gathering its own instead of getting them from the DOT, so it expects to be able to make them available faster. Total STARLIGHT ridership was 30,890 in May, up 15% from a year earlier..... CANADIAN TRANSPORT COMMISSION late in July slapped the wrists of CP Rail, after the railway abandoned the northern portion of its Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway on Vancouver Island. The CTC said the cessation of service was illegal and ordered CP to rebuild the two bridges deemed unsafe, which led to the closure. Rebuilding will cost CP about $2 million. CTC said CP was trying to discontinue service by a devious method; it couldn't apply for discontinuance because the line is making a "marginal profit".....

* * *

AMERICAN FREEDOM TRAIN was pulled by two GG-1's thru New York's Penn Station enroute to the Long Island display area a few weeks ago. PC-marked engine 4883 led ConRail-labelled #4879 along track 11. Third rail clearance problems prevented the steam engine from operating. LIRR engines took over near Sunnyside yards..... BRITAIN'S HST TRAIN looks like a strong possibility for corridor testing in the U.S. When DOT Secretary Coleman rode it recently, he said there might be a market for the trains in the U.S. if they could be built under license here, according to Railway Age (Aug 9)..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION has issued the locations of the hearing rooms for hearings on SR's proposed discontinuance of the PIEDMONT. They are: Room B67, Federal Bldg, 220 7th St NE, Charlottesville VA, Sept 14; 2nd Floor, U.S. Post Office, Church St, Lynchburg VA, Sept 15; Conference Rm B25, Federal Courthouse, 324 W. Market St, Greensboro NC, Sept 16; Public Library Auditorium, 310 N. Tryon, Charlotte NC, Sept 17; and ICC offices, Washington DC Sept 13.....

* * *

UP BUSINESS CAR 111 was running on SP rails, on the COAST STARLIGHT, Aug 18, tho the move violated SP's embargo on over-40-year-old cars. Amtrak is reportedly putting the matter of SP's refusal to operate them in passenger trains before the National Arbitration Board..... MAKING PLANS FOR a joint Amtrak-Auto-Train operation on the FLORIDIAN route, the two rail corporations ran a test train July 19, reports the Birmingham NRHS's "Cinders." A small Amtrak special train ran St. Petersburg to Sanford, where it picked up Auto-Train cars, making the following extraordinary consist: Auto-Train engine 4011, Amtrak engines 608 & 632; cars Amtrak 3221 "Miami Beach", Amt 9467 dome coach, Amt 5474 coach, Amt 2830 "Klamath Valley", Amt 5480 coach, Amt 2611 "Pacific Forest", Amt 5458 coach, Amt 2535 "Swan" slumbercoach, Amt 2810 "Mobile River", Amt 10,000 track inspection car; A-T 463 dome coach, A-T 908 dome coach, A-T 543 dome night club, A-T 597 kitchen dorm, A-T 580 buffet, A-T 204 slpr, A-T 303 slpr; A-T auto carriers 39, 68, 53, 12, 6, 10, 18, 57, and 48; and A-T 471 dome coach "caboose." The 3-engine, 27-car train (7 Amtrak cars were put on at Jacksonville) ran on the one-night-out schedule planned for the FLORIDIAN this fall, and after some delays arrived Chicago at 2:38am July 21. A southbound test train left Chicago July 22 with the following Amtrak equipment: engines 637, 606; cars 3221, 9467, 5474, 5476, 5465, 5480, 5458, 2535, 2810, and 10,000. At A-T's Louisville terminal the train picked up A-T engine 4011 and more A-T cars. Amtrak has not stated whether it considered the test a success.....

NEW YORK STATE'S Dept. of Transportation announced on Aug 5 that it will negotiate with Amtrak to operate the troubled ADIRONDACK for four more years, and will take steps to improve the service..... AMTRAK PRESIDENT REISTRUP will speak on "Intercity Passenger Service--Where is it Heading?" on Sep 24 at an annual conference of railroad editors in Boston. Others on the same topic include Charles Webb, head of the dreaded NAMBO, Richard Briggs of the AAR, and Orren Beaty of NARP..... PRELIMINARY RIDERSHIP FIGURES for the SAN DIEGANS, just released, show that July patronage increased 15.9% above July 1975. Amfleet equipment was introduced in May..

* * *

A SPECIAL SHOWING of Amfleet cars used on the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL was to be held in Vancouver Aug 18, since there wasn't time for a display there earlier before the cars were put into service. An engine, Amcoach and Amcafe were on display at the CN/Amtrak station..... THE LATEST NEWS on revival plans for the DEL MONTE is that Amtrak is saying "no" to the additional San Francisco-Santa Cruz service--the old SUNTAN SPECIAL..... THE COST OF domestic airline flying is going up 2% Sept 15, after the CAB approved fare increases. They will cost the flying public an estimated $85 million per year more than at present..... "THE FIRST ACCIDENT in 20 years" at a crossing in Atascadero, CA, north of San Luis Obispo, saw a cement truck demolished by the northbound COAST STARLIGHT on Aug 5. The truck driver escaped with only minor injuries, tho he was trapped in the wreckage for 40mins until extricated. The late-running train had about 350 aboard, and suffered very minor damage. The wreck happened at 3:35pm (see allusion to this wreck also in the article on p.5).....

* * *

A CLEVELAND READER writes: the rumor is that local Cleveland Union Terminal buffs and local politicians are seeking an injunction to halt Aug 31 groundbreaking and start of construction on the new Amtrak Lakefront station. Apparently they prefer to see Cleveland passengers suffer in the present inadequate trailer station for the next few years while they try to coordinate bus companies, Amtrak, etc. to move into C.U.T., and try to secure incredible financing necessary from the financially troubled city, Amtrak, bus companies, the government, etc. Amtrak's present site on the lakefront mainline is excellent, with ample safe parking, etc., despite C.U.T. buffs' constant organized barrage of local letters-to-the-editors to the contrary, in which they continually refer to Amtrak's new station as an "Amshack"...

* * *

WRITES AMTRAK AGENT Garland Harper from Williamson, WV: "I am sorry the majority of train riders rated 'my train' (the MOUNTAINEER--see ratings, last issue) as the poorest in the country. As humble as it is, I still love it dearly. I am flattered, however, to learn that the station services rated a whopping 7.3--I hope this figure wasn't a misprint." No, it wasn't a misprint. Mr. Harper also notes that he has seen car 8400 on his train recently (see last issue, p.18), but car 8401 still hasn't shown up..... THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPT. of Transportation is actively pushing for the Pittsburgh-Cleveland Corridor, as there is presently equipment in service (ex-EL Cleveland-Youngstown and P&LE Pittsburgh-College) and the run would be a good one for all concerned..... AN IMPROVED FORM of Lexan, called Lexan 4000, is now available, reports Peter Roehm, and will be used in future Budd car window replacements on the Boston & Maine. The railroad also finds that an inner layer of glass can be broken if the outer Lexan flexes enough to strike the inner glass panel. Thus the B&M will use two Lexan layers. He says there is still another window material (unidentified) of better quality that is being tested on some Boston buses and that will eventually be used as standard equipment on them..... THE BUDD COMPANY has announced the design of a new type of Budd car, called the SPV-2000. It's a 2-car train with 2 engines per car and is faster accelerating and has higher top speed than the older RDC. Each car seats 84 or 109, compared to 89 in an RDC. It uses standard highway truck engines, and has modular, adaptable interior with electric heating and air conditioning.....

FORMER AMTRAK SLEEPER "Morrow Brook" has been acquired by the Smokey Hill Railroad Club of Kansas City..... A WOMAN PASSENGER on the ANN RUTLEDGE (a train planned for discontinuance in the fall) overheard addressing the Amcafe attendant: "Your train is darling"..... THE EMERGING CORRIDOR between Oakland and Sacramento (and including Stockton and San Francisco) is moving ahead well. A bill spOnsored by State Senator James R. Mills of San Diego is nearing final approval in California. It would provide $3.05 million for funding service, which will include an across-the-platform Amtrak-BART transfer in Richmond CA. Contra Costa County approved the plan last week, which would add Martinez to the list of stops; others are Davis, Fairfield-Suisun, and Richmond, besides Oakland. But funds for rebuilding the present Amtrak station in Sacramento have been dropped from the bill. It apparently includes money to help support a revived San Francisco-Monterey DEL MONTE train. The San Francisco Examiner, as ever, doesn't seem to like the idea of the DEL MONTE: its Sunday front news page (Aug 15) talked of Carmel's traffic problems and tourist glut, and quoted Carmel's Mayor Hammond as telling a woman who favored the revived train "Look, lady, you've got to be kidding." There was no discussion at all of how a train would cut down on automobiles entering the seaside resort town.....

* * *

A PROPOSED SCHEDULE for the in-the-planning Seattle/Portland-Ogden experimental train from one source looks like this: lv Seattle 6:30am, lv Portland 10:30am, lv Boise 9:45pm, ar Ogden 5am, lv Ogden 5:45am, ar Salt Lake 7am; westbound, lv Salt Lake 9:30pm, ar Ogden 10:30pm, lv Boise 7am, ar Portland 5:15pm, ar Seattle 9:20pm. Schedules would, of course, allow connections with the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR..... SOME POLITICAL TALK: Senator Dole of Kansas, Ford's choice for Vice-President on the Republican ticket, has been mentioned here earlier as being the one who was to be appeased by the DOT's selection of the aborted Denver-Washington DC experimental Amtrak route. The administration's stand on Amtrak (thru Coleman's words and actions) seems to be hurting it at least a little. We've had more than one rail supporter and lifelong Republican tell us that "for the first time in our lives we will vote Democratic" because of the DOT's stance toward passenger trains. Others believe that a Democratic victory in November is virtually assured, and so are looking for a total house cleaning at the DOT. It's hard to imagine how Amtrak would fare if the DOT supported it for once; the two have been at constant loggerheads since Amtrak's formation in 1971. RTN reader Raymond Hannon of Dallas spoke before the Republican Resolutions (Platform) Committee Community and National Development Subcommittee on Aug 9 and urged them to "endorse the concept of balanced transportation by a commitment to the growth of rail passenger service".....

* * *

THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE'S columnist Jack Mabley wrote in opposition to passenger train and mass transit subsidies in Illinois on Aug 3. Quote: "There's no questions trains have some niceties buses don't have. But we can run a bus with plus seats and a hostess if they want"..... WE DIDN'T MENTION last issue that Amtrak's new sleeping cars on order are to have more seating in first class bedrooms than conventional sleepers do, and are to feature a folding table as well..... NORTHBOUND LONE STAR on Aug 4 struck a motor track inspection car of ICG's between milepos ts 44 and 45 on the Pequot line near South Joliet IL. The $2500 motor car was demolished, but the signalman operating it got off in time..... THE PASSENGER EXTRA referred to as 1st section of the PANAMA on the Consists page ran from Chicago to New Orleans on Aug 10 and returned the 15th..... VERMONT'S STEAM TRAIN is featured in a New York Times article by Christina Tree (Aug 22 issue).....

THE SOUTHERN CRESCENT southbound on Aug 15 hit a motorcycle in Poplarville MS. Two people had been riding it down the middle of the main line track, and they leaped to safety but the cycle was destroyed in a burst of flames. The lead engine, E8 unit SR 6911, sustained minor structural damages, and was set on fire.... THE NEW ORLEANS locomotive shop, while not yet operated by Amtrak, has been selected as a new locomotive base, and 16-18 engineers are to be assigned there--it is believed that P30 engines will be assigned there, as ads were run locally seeking mechanical personnel with experience in GE diesel/electrical systems. The new shop supervisor already on duty there came to Amtrak from Auto-Train, which uses an all-GE powered fleet of engines..... IN LAST ISSUE we asked for consists of Canadian trains swollen by the recent airline strike, and we have some: CP Rail CANADIAN, train 1 at Vancouver Jun 24: engines 1406, 8507, 1400; cars 613, 617, 108, 120, 118, 115, 516 Skyline, "Bayfield Manor", "Christie Manor", "Chateau Maisonneuve", "Douglas Manor", diner "Emerald", "Chateau Cadillac", "MacDonald Manor", and "Banff Park". Train reported packed. Following are CN trains at Montreal on Jun 22: train #1W: cars 9640, unnumbered car to Capreol, 5536, 5530, 762, 5718, "Cape Chignecto", dinette 427, "Green Hill", "Euclid", "Erinview", "Mt. Robson" (crew), "Cape Canso" (deadhead to Capreol). Train 12: mail car, baggage, dorm 9482, "Green Hurst", 5725, 1358, 4 unnumbered cars, 753, 5730, diner 1365, "Avant Garge", "Green Cabin", "Margaree River", "Skeena River", "Val D'Or" (crew), and "Battle River." Train 171: 2 baggage cars, "Pembroke", "Fort William", 5210, 5203, 5188, "Silver Lake", "Campbellton."..... FULL DINING CAR service has returned to the Northeast Corridor: trains 171-172 are running with cars 8398-8399 (ex-UP Chuck Wagon cars), and trains 66-67 have been running with full diners lately.....

* * *

AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT tells us that long range Amtrak plans call for the introduction of high speed overnight sleeper-express trains linking major Eastern and Midwestern cities. The trains would leave one city between 5 and 9pm and arrive in another between 6 and 9am. They would be aimed at business men who now use early morning air service. Such routes would be NY-Cleveland, NY-Detroit, NY-Montreal, NY-Pittsburgh, NY-Chicago, Chicago-Cincinnati, Chicago-Louisville, Chicago-Memphis, Chicago-Kansas City, Chicago-Minneapolis, Chicago-Cleveland, and Chicago-Pittsburgh. They would probably run non-stop with sleeping cars, slumbercoaches, and dining cars. This system would be similar to the system of overnight-sleeper express trains used in Europe for many years. Another unconfirmed report has it that Amtrak will place an order for Amsleepers in October..... MEMBERS OF CONGRESS are saying that the Idaho train is definitely forthcoming, but the startup date is still undecided..... NEW YORK STATE Dept. of Transportation this month issued an "historic" 5-year transportation program, and submitted it to Gov. Carey. It puts heavy emphasis upon public transportation and the preservation and rehabilitation of existing facilities and services in all modes rather than major new construction..... A COMMUTER HOVERCRAFT made a trial run on the East River on Aug 7, according to the NY Times..... THE PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL reportedly will be rescheduled at Vancouver BC effective Oct 31, leaving Vancouver at 7am instead of 6:50, and northbound arrival will be 10:45pm instead of the present 11pm. This would seem to indicate the speeding up of the train mentioned elsewhere in this issue... THE BAY AREA has received some very rare August rains this month. We went out last week in a very wet rain to photograph the S.F. ZEPHYR, running 40mins late, from a new vantage point, took a wrong turn and found ourselves on an overpass above the highway 17 freeway. Just ahead of us a truck and trailer jackknifed, blocking the overpass for enough time to allow the ZEPHYR to elude us. We missed our photo of the train in the rain..... EQUIPMENT IDLED BY conversion of Seattle based local trains to Amfleet has been showing up on NORTH COAST HIAWATHA runs amid talk that Amtrak is once again facing a car shortage on western routes. Diners have been in especially short supply, and some NCH runs are regularly made with ex-GN "Ranch" cars in diner service.....

CARS & CONSISTS

*CP Rail ATLANTIC LIMITED train 41, Montreal, Aug 1: engine 1800; cars 2720 bag, 2272, 123 (coaches), 505 Skyline dome, "Hearne Manor" slpr, bus. car "Laurentian."

*CP Rail CANADIAN train 1, Toronto, Aug 9: engines 1401, 1406; cars 601, 104, 508 Skyline, diner "Louise", slprs "Franklin Manor", "Chateau Brule", "Kootenay Park."

*CN SUPER CONTINENTAL train 2, Montreal, Aug 7: 6529, 6628, 9658, 5486, 5574, 5542, 759, 5713, "Cape Race", 432, "Greenway", "Evanston", "Elnora", "Val Marie."

*ADIRONDACK, train 68, Aug 9: engine D&H 18 (Montreal-Albany), Amt 427 (Albany-Croton), ConRail 5001 (Croton-NY); cars D&H 206 "Essex County" (Montreal-Albany), Amt 3960, D&H 202, Amt 6418, Amt 6417 (Albany-NY).

*WASHINGTON IRVING, train 72, Hudson NY Aug 9: engine ?; cars 1750 "Silver Spring" 6446, 3912, D&H 32.

*AURORA, Alaska RR train 1776, Anchorage, Aug 12: engines 1530, 1512 (F7's); cars 6310, 6331 (bag), 5416, 5403 (coaches), 5013 (bar-lounge), diner 4806, dome coach 7013, coaches 5408, 5420, 5424, bus. car "Glacier Pass." Train 1775, same: engines 1522, 1517 (F7a, F7b); baggage 6325, 6308, coaches 5404, 5437, bar-lounge 5012, diner 4815, coach 5428, dome coach 7014, coaches 5415, 5443.

*WHITTIER SHUTTLE, Alaska RR Extra, Anchorage, Aug 12: engine 1802; coach 43, snack bar coach 88, coach 89, caboose 1776; 10 auto-carrying flat cars added Portage-Whittier.

*White Pass & Yukon mixed train 2, Lake Bennett B.C. (from Whitehorse), Aug 7: engines 96, 97, 92; 10 container flat cars; 7 auto-carrying flat cars; boxcar 702 (baggage); 211, 216 (combines with cupola); parlor cars 268 "Lake Lewes", 240 "Lake Bennett", 274 "Lake Primrose", 258 "Lake Kluane", 280 "Lake Dease", 260 "Lake Tutshi", 282 "Lake Klukshu", 238 "Lake Watson", 288 "Lake McClintock", 234 "Lake Cowley" Mixed train #1, same: engines 99, 100, 94; 4 auto-carrying flatcars; 704, 730 (boxcars for baggage); 209, 214 (combines with cupola); parlor cars 266 "Lake Schwatka", 224 "Lake Marsh", 222 "Lake Linderman", 270 "Lake Kathleen", 236 "Lake Mayo", 252 "Lake Nuncho", 278 "Lake Fairweather", 286 "Lake Kusava".

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 449, Pittsfield Aug 13: engines 403 (E8A), PC 292 (E8A); cars 2520, 5646, 5656, 3323 "Anthony Wayne", 1375, deadheading Amcoaches 21178, 21193, 21192 (no electricity attached; LSL drumhead & headlights for backup move attached to rear Amcoach; 1st movement of Amfleet cars on B&A Division of Conrail and longest train there since Amtrak takeover except for LAKE SHORE inaugural).

*MONTREALER, train 61, St. Albans Jul 24: engines 435, 446; cars 1514, 2105 "Henderson", 2772 "Columbia", 2230 "Avon Park", 8335, 3301, 5631, 5655, 5602, 7002, 5241, 5452, 5402, private cars "Lionel Ives" (Montreal-Springfield), "Shenandoah" & "Eugene Field" (St. Albans-NY). train 60, Montreal, Aug 7: engines 435, 434; cars 1512, 2703 "Sarasota", 2836 "Missouri Valley", 2776 "Alachua County", 8333, 3000, 5406, 5631, 5655, 6027.

*PALMETTO, train 90, NY Jul 22: engine 966; cars 1373, 20677, 21808, 21805, 21800, 20752, 21803, 21083, 21006, 20008, 21159.

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, NY Aug 3: engine 908; cars 1056, 2024 "Loch Sloy", 5686, 5255, 5263, 5266, 5270, 3404, 8800, 8801, 3250 "Wawasee", 2235 "Magnolia Gardens", 2558 "Rock Creek."

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, Seattle Aug 10: engines 553, 558; cars 1161, 2253 "Star Range" (dorm), 5230, 4826, 4821, 5238, 8104, 4509, 4500, 4544, 4861, 4499, 3351, 8039, 2721 "Pine Grove", 2713 "Pine Cavern", 2370 "Regal Town", (deadhead:) 1376, 4461.

*The following Amtrak cars are being scrapped at Rail Systems Inc., Mira Loma: 4880, 7503, 4489.

*PANAMA LIMITED, train 58 1st section, New Orleans Aug 15: engines 710, 704, 440; cars 2017, "Wren", 6450, 6453, 6402, 8382 "Harvest Inn", 5807, 5683, 6067, 8099, 5403, 3920, 3820, 6065, 5653, 7200, 6072, 3341. 2nd section: engines 436, 712, 722, power car 1918; cars 1054, 2231 "Hialeah", 2303 "Jay Bird", 2812 "Green River", 8310, 5804, 6062, 6045, 6032, 5462, 5425, 3345. At Frenier LA the 2nd section ran ahead as the 1st took to a siding.

HELP KEEP PRINCESS MARGUERITE IN OPERATION

The recent decision by British Columbia Transport Minister Jack Davis to replace Princess Marguerite on the Seattle-Victoria run with a diesel ferry has not been confirmed by: 1) The B.C. Cabinet 2) The B.C. Premier, or 3) The Steamship Co. board.

Public opinion is important. Please address a card or letter to:

Hon. Premier Bill Bennett
Parliament Building
Victoria, B.C. Canada

Please ask Premier Bennett to reconsider; and to have the Marguerite retained. Letters from distant points ARE important.

Glenn Lee Princess Marguerite Committee
800 - 1st Avenue North, #37, Seattle, Washington 98109.

RTN'S

RAIL TRAVEL YEARBOOK

1975

WHERE IS RTN'S RAIL TRAVEL YEARBOOK 1975?

A report to the reader:

Our first yearbook has obviously been delayed beyond its originally announced publication date. It will be out very soon. In the meantime, it has been growing in size and features, so you'll be getting more than you thought you would!

Thank you for your advance order! If you haven't ordered yet, and want to be assured of a copy of this very limited edition, send the coupon or a note to us, with remittance of $3.50 per copy (Calif. add tax of 21¢--or 23¢ in BART counties). Thank you!

MESSAGE MEDIA
Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Send me ___ copy(ies) of RTN's Rail Travel Yearbook 1975 as soon as it's ready.
Amount enclosed: $ _____.

NAME . . . . . .

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. . . . . .

Express Ads

CHARTER THE AMTRAK-APPROVED PRIVATE CAR "MINNEAPOLIS CLUB." This beautiful round end observation-lounge (with full wet bar) seats 32 passengers. Excellent for Reno weekend parties. Reserve your choice date now from GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton-Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994.

Dining car china dishes and glasses, several railroads. Stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kansas 67213.

October 9, 10, 1976: A Branch Line Ramble over scenic freight only lines of the Canadian National Railways will be operated out of London, Ontario each day using Budd RDCs. Saturday trip will operate to Stratford, Listowel and Kincardine, and return. Sunday trip (one way with Budd cars, return via regular train at extra fare from Burlington) to Toronto via St. Thomas (via old London and Port Stanley interurban route), to Tillsonburg Junction, Lynden, Guelph, Georgetown, Burlington and Toronto. Saturday trip $22.00, Sunday trip $18.00, both days $38.00. For further information, including return fares from Burlington and hotel reservations in London, write: Branch Line Ramble, Windsor-Essex Division, Canadian Railway Historical Association, 300 Cabana Road East, Windsor, Ontario N9G 1A3.

CASS SCENIC WEEKEND! Riley south Oct 15 from DC, north Oct 17. $55.00 includes transportation and lodging. Meals available. Hoosierail Tours 202-483-0369.

COLORADO TIMETABLES of long ago have been reprinted by us, and over 30 varieties are available. Send for lists. Colorado Railroad Museum, P.O. Box 10, Golden, Colorado 80401.

WANTED: Rep kj wt tr Dsb g ev or yb. Dave, P. O. Box 1016, Colton, CA. 92324.

CHESAPEAKE & OHIO STEAM/DIESEL Calendar for 1977. Thirteen full 8½x11" photos and appointment style calendar. Unfolds to 11x17; heavy gloss paper; wide variety of freight and passenger action. $3.00--or $3.50 via First Class mail. C&O Historical Society, P.O. Box 417, Alderson, W.Va. 24910.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1.00 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads (camera-ready copy) $25.00 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 inches). $12.50 for quarter page. Write: Message Media, Ad Dept., P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you!

DID YOU MISS the year 1975? Now you can have all 24 issues of Rail Travel News from 1975 (Volume 5) all in one package for just seven dollars. Write: MESSAGE MEDIA - RTN, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. We have many other back issues still available; write for information, listing your needs. The years 1972 on are still fairly complete.

WATCH FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT in these pages of the publication of RTN's Rail Travel Yearbook 1975, the much-delayed book which will appear soon. If you haven't ordered yours yet, see the coupon printed in this issue. Price is $3.50 postpaid per copy (Californians must add sales tax). Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Thank you for your patience--we hope you will find that it has been rewarded.

RTN reader takes on the mighty telephone company: subscriber Sam Wyly of Dallas, head of the Wyly Corporation and owner of private car DT1000 (formerly UC1000, formerly PC1000), has filed suit, thru his corporation and its subsidiary Data Transmission Co., against AT&T, accusing it of trying to monopolize the data transmission market. The suit asks $285 million in treble damages. The Wall Street Journal reported filing of the suit in its Aug 19 issue, and said that AT&T has declined to comment on the suit until the company has studied the charges being brought against it.

LETTERS (continued from page 2)

At the time of the accident in Belgium, the train was going about 90mph. At this speed the old cars were swaying badly as they went over switches, and though the accident was thought to be due to expansion of the rails in the heat (high 90s), I can't help but wonder if the speed wasn't excessive for the condition of the track and equipment.

Surely as train speeds increase, the chance of more disastrous accidents must also be greater. I wish there would be more comments on the safety of trains going 90, 100, 125mph, as proposed for the U.S. As it is, having been in two train accidents in five years, I am now uncomfortable with high speeds as I never was before. I wish you would include comments from Amtrak personnel, when discussing train speed, on safety of track and equipment, or is this a taboo subject?

John W. Patton
Fremont, California

Mr. Brown overlooks that the summer of 1976 was for Europe the hottest in memory for most people... There is rarely any need for air conditioning in Britain or on most of the Continent. TEE and Intercity trains are air conditioned, but easy opening of the broad compartment windows during stops usually handles the situation well enough. Some, not all, sleepers are air conditioned. Of course Spain offers a choice; Italy has an assortment too.

North Americans don't like compartments, and some feel sick riding backwards. I have seen passengers move from Scandinavian first-class compartments to Milwaukee-type "coaches" which are second class, to the bemusement of employees...

There are many things I like about North American trains of old, as compared with European trains; but when I step into a station and see 4 or 5 suppertime trains between Frankfurt and Heidelberg; when I see that if I miss a train there is another in less than an hour... In 1971 I wrote a two-piece feature in a newspaper Sunday Magazine concerning how European passenger practice could be superimposed on then-new Amtrak. The photos came from the German Travel Bureau and Concerned Nurnberg, about the size of Buffalo (home of the paper). We can learn from one another.

William C. Kessel
Hamburg, New York

I can sympathize with Mr. Brown, for his visit to Europe evidently coincided with the hottest spell for two decades. Normally, air conditioning is needed only on an average 20 days of each year, and that only in daytime. However, all TEE trains are made up of air-conditioned cars. We do have around 500 air-conditioned cars on British Rail, used on the London-Glasgow/Manchester/Liverpool/Bristol/Leeds/Newcastle/Aberdeen routes. British Rail put them on business rather than tourist routes, for good commercial reasons.

J. H. Price, Editor
Thomas Cook Continental Timetable
London, England

The "ex-Army baggage cars" that you referred to (last issue, p.17) were actually former kitchen cars designed for use in hospital trains. Rail Systems Inc. converted 30 of these cars into baggage cars numbered 1350 thru 1379, but they are not "all electric." The cars are called "Dual Service" cars because they are designed to operate on steam or head-end power trains. On the end of the car you will notice four power receptacles, two communication receptacles, one "dummy" receptacle, one signal hose, one main reservoir hose, and one brake pipe hose. (Due to railroad rules, the cars operating on ConRail have had their steam conduits removed.) These cars are the first converted from steam-only by Amtrak, and are the only dual service cars on the roster.

J. D. Coran, Engineering Manager
Rail Systems Inc.
Mira Loma, California